

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 2025

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS DEFENSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, NATO
SUBJECT: AGENDA FOR MAY NATO NAC MEETING

REF: (A) USNATO 1962 (DTG 051627Z APR 77)
(B) STATE 075291 (DTG 050139Z APR 77)
(C) USNATO 1801(DTG 291835Z MAR 77)

1. IN REACTING TO WASHINGTON'S TENTATIVE
SUGGESTIONS FOR INITIATIVES TO BE PROPOSED AT THE NATO SUMMIT,
SECRETARY GENERAL LUNS' CENTRAL POINT WAS THAT WHAT NATO NEEDS IS
A STRONG INFUSION OF POLITICAL WILL TO DO WHAT EVERYONE KNOWS
NEEDS DOING.
IN OUR VIEW LUNS IS RIGHT IN RECOGNIZING, AS HE DID,
THAT THE PROBLEM IS POLITICAL RATHER THAN ONE OF
"IMPERFECT ORGANIZATION OR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE." (REF A).

2. ACCORDINGLY, WE BELIEVE IT OF CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE AT THE SUMMIT
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THAT THE PRESIDENT CARRY A POLITICAL MESSAGE TO EUROPE,
COUCHED IN STRONG AND UNEQUIVOCAL TERMS, AND THAT THE
THRUST OF HIS STATEMENT BE SUFFICIENTLY DIRECT TO COMMAND
BROAD PUBLIC ATTENTION AND STIFFEN THE SPINES OF EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENTS AND GOVERNMENTS. THE GIST OF HIS MESSAGE, AS
WE PROPOSED IN REF C, SHOULD BE THAT THE ALLIES, WORKING
TOGETHER, CAN MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE; ABOVE
ALL, THE CHALLENGE OF MAINTAINING NATO'S DETERRENT STRENGTH
AS A NECESSARY CONDITION FOR THE PURSUIT OF DETENTE AND ARMS

LIMITATION POLICIES.

3. WITHIN THIS CONTEXT, WE AGREE WITH REF B THAT EXPOSITIONS OF DETAILED PROGRAMMATIC AND ORGANIZATIONAL STEPS ON THE DEFENSE SIDE (PARAS 2 THROUGH 4) SHOULD BE LEFT FOR THE DEFENSE MINISTERS' MEETING IN BRUSSELS THE FOLLOWING WEEK. WE WOULD HOPE THAT THE PRESIDENT COULD BRIEFLY ALLUDE TO THEM, SINCE WE SEE THEM AS A LOGICAL FOLLOW-ON TO THE NEED FOR ALL ALLIES TO SHARE EQUITABLY THE BURDEN OF ALLIANCE COLLECTIVE DEFENSE. THEY SHOULD NOT, HOWEVER, IMPEDE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRESIDENT'S MAIN MESSAGE, THAT THE CHALLENGE OF MAINTAINING NATO'S DETERRENT MUST BE BORNE COLLECTIVELY, AND THAT THE US IS PREPARED TO DO ITS SHARE. MOREOVER, EXCESSIVE CONCENTRATION AT THE SUMMIT ON PROGRAMS, STUDIES AND MECHANISMS COULD BE SEIZED AS AN "ESCAPE VALVE" THROUGH WHICH ALLIES, ESPECIALLY THE FRG AND UK COULD VENT THE VIEW THAT MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCIES CAN SUBSTITUTE FOR POLITICAL WILL. THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR THE FRG, WHOSE SLIGHTLY REDUCED DEFENSE BUDGET REPRESENTS A LARGE FRACTION OF THE EUROPEAN TOTAL.

4. THE DEFENSE MINISTERS' MEETING MAY 17-18 WILL PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY NOT ONLY TO FLESH-OUT WHATEVER REFERENCE THE PRESIDENT MAKES TO PROGRAMMATIC AND ORGANIZATIONAL STEPS, BUT ALSO TO EXPAND IN SPECIFIC TERMS THE PRESIDENT'S EXPRESSION OF THE NEED TO BEAR COLLECTIVELY THE FINANCIAL BURDEN OF MAINTAINING THE DETERRENT. IT NOW
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APPEARS CERTAIN THAT DEFENSE MINISTERS WILL CONSIDER AT LEAST TWO ALTERNATIVE VERSIONS OF RESOURCES LANGUAGE FOR MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE 1977, ONE OF WHICH WILL CALL FOR REAL ANNUAL INCREASES IN DEFENSE SPENDING OF AT LEAST THREE PER CENT, AND THE OTHER FOR FAR LESS. WE WOULD HOPE THAT THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS IN LONDON WILL BE SUFFICIENTLY STRONG -- AS EXPRESSIONS OF THE AMERICAN SENSE OF FAIR PLAY, TO INDUCE HIS COLLEAGUES TO INSTRUCT THEIR MODS TO OPT FOR THE STRONGER VERSION.

5. FINALLY, WE AGREE THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO SUGGEST, PER PARA 5, REF B, THAT THE ALLIANCE UNDERTAKE AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF CURRENT TRENDS IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS. THESE MATTERS WILL BE OF CENTRAL INTEREST TO THE ALLIES, AND OUR WILLINGNESS TO PURSUE CONSULTATION WILL BE WELCOMED. HOWEVER, WE SEE NO NEED FOR A STAFF OF OUTSIDE EXPERTS, SINCE OUR GOVERNMENTS ALREADY POSSESS THE HIGHEST EXPERTISE. STRAUSZ-HUPE

NOTE BY OC/T: NATO 2025 NOT PASSED DEFENSE.

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